Sexual Health

Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Prevention

Introduction

- Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) is the virus that causes the deadly disease, Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS).
- Since first being identified in 1981, HIV/AIDS has become an epidemic, killing at least 20 million people worldwide.
- In the US, nearly 1 million people are living with HIV. An estimated 250,000 of these infected Americans don't even know it themselves. About 40,000 Americans are newly infected every year.

Importance

- Since 1985, over 5,000 active duty Sailors and Marines have been infected with HIV. Of these, about 500 are still on active duty.
- For Sailors and Marines, HIV infection affects their lives every day. HIV can harm their health, lifestyle, relationships, family, and career.

Objective

Upon completion of this lesson, you will be able to:

- explain what HIV is and how it is transmitted.
- explain how HIV affects all aspects of a person's life.
- explain risk reduction options to prevent the transmission of HIV.

Scenario

You met a person you really like, and the subject of sex has come up. What will you decide? Will you say and stick to "no" if that is what you want? Is there a way to know if this person has HIV? Do Sailors and Marines get HIV? What would happen to you if you got HIV? How can you protect yourself?

Outline

- HIV Transmission
- How HIV Affects Sailors
- HIV Prevention

HIV Transmission

Introduction

- Contrary to what some people may think, HIV/AIDS is not a disease exclusive to men who have sex with men or people who share needles.
- Worldwide, most infections are spread through unprotected male/female sexual intercourse.
- One in 300 Americans is infected with HIV today.
- Many Sailors and Marines have become infected.

Transmission Methods

- HIV is transmitted from an infected person in one of these four body fluids:
  - Blood
  - Semen
  - Vaginal fluid
  - Breast milk

Transmission in the U.S.

- In the US, HIV is spread primarily by:
  - Sexual contact with an infected person. Both men and women can get or spread HIV.
  - Sharing needles and/or syringes (primarily for drug injection) with someone who is infected.
- In the US, HIV is also spread - but less commonly - through:
  - Transfusions of infected blood or blood clotting factors.
  - Babies born to HIV-infected women may become infected before or during birth or through breast-feeding after birth.

HIV Among Sailors and Marines

- Over 5,000 active duty Sailors and Marines have become infected with HIV. About 100 are newly infected with HIV each year.
- Although active duty Sailors and Marines are tested for HIV at least once during every two-year period, the HIV test does not protect you from the virus.
- So, having sex with an active duty Sailor or Marine doesn't guarantee your safety.

How Can You Tell?

- You can't tell if someone has HIV by the way they look.
- People who are HIV positive look normal. They don't look sick.
- In fact, an estimated 250,000 Americans who are infected with HIV don't even know it themselves.

What is HIV?

It is the virus that causes the bubonic plague.

It is AIDS.

It is the virus that causes AIDS.

It is the bubonic plague.

A:

Correct!

- Correct.
- HIV is the virus that causes AIDS.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!
- This is not what HIV is.

BACK

The chances of getting HIV from a blood transfusion in the U.S. are slim.

TRUE

FALSE

Correct!

- This statement is true.
- The chances of getting HIV from a blood transfusion are 1 in 12,135,000.

BACK NEXT

A:

Incorrect!

- This statement is not false.
- The chances of getting HIV from a blood transfusion are 1 in 12,135,000.

BACK

Identify how HIV is transmitted. (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ Sharing needles
- ☐ Donating blood
- ☐ Having unprotected sex

A:

Correct!

- Correct.
- The following are the primary methods HIV is transmitted in the United States:
  - Sharing needles
  - Having unprotected sex

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- You can not transmit HIV by donating blood.

BACK

Having unprotected sex with another Servicemember is safe because he/she is tested for HIV every two years.

TRUE

FALSE

Correct!

- The statement is false.
- Having the HIV test in no way protects you from getting HIV. All it shows is that at that point in time, the person did not have HIV. In the meantime, the person could have been exposed to HIV and not even know it.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- The statement is not true.
- Having the HIV test in no way protects you from getting HIV. All it shows is that at that point in time, the person did not have HIV. In the meantime, the person could have been exposed to HIV and not even know it.

BACK

Identify the fluids through which HIV may be transmitted. (Select all that apply.)

- ☐ Blood
- ☐ Vaginal fluid
- ☐
- ☐
- ☐ Breast milk
- ☐ Sweat
- ☐ Urine
- ☐ Semen

A:

Correct!

- Your answer is correct.
- All of the following are fluids that may transmit HIV:
  - Blood
  - Semen
  - Breast milk
  - Vaginal fluid

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- These are not fluids that transmit HIV:
  - Spit
  - Urine
  - Sweat
  - Snot/mucus

BACK

How HIV Affects Sailors

Introduction

- HIV infection negatively affects your health, lifestyle, relationships, family, and career.
- There is no vaccine and no cure for HIV infection.
- People who get HIV live with it, think about it, and have to accommodate it every day for the rest of their lives.

Health

- Some people become ill quickly after becoming infected, while others remain healthy for many years.
- Although there are drugs to extend and improve your quality of life once you have been diagnosed with HIV, there is still no cure for HIV infection.

"It's unfortunate but because of the new meds I am very very lucky to still be alive. A lot of guys I knew back in the day are gone." HIV positive Sailor

Lifestyle

- People with HIV, like any person with a compromised immune status, must carefully protect their health.
- Proper diet, exercise, stress management, rest, etc. are important to preserve their health and to avoid new infections.

"I get a lot of shit because they tell me to not smoke or drink, wear protection, don't get stressed, eat right, maintain health, crap like that - that's the only hassle, being told what is and isn't good for you." – HIV positive Sailor

Relationships

- HIV may affect past and future relationships.
- HIV may also affect new relationships.

"HIV has impacted my relationship with my significant other in ways I never imagined. The issues involved with intimacy, sex, family planning, risks, etc. have created barriers (both real and perceived) that impact the very essence of our relationship. Sharing your life with someone can challenge even the strongest of relationships, throw HIV in the mix and you now have a scenario that forces you to re-examine every aspect of your life, your significant other's life, and your life together as you have come to

Family

- Family members are often very supportive and helpful when a Sailor or Marine becomes infected with HIV.
- However, in some cases, Sailors and Marines have experienced rejection by one or more members of their family. Other Sailors and Marines have never told their family.

"I have told my family yet because I just don't want to worry them. My folks are old and they don't need to worry about this right now. I know that this would be very disappointing to them. All my little brothers and sisters look at me as an example and if they knew about this, I would be ashamed." HIV positive Sailor

Career

- HIV positive Sailors and Marines are assigned only to non-deployable billets in the United States. This policy affects a person's opportunities to travel, accumulate sea duty time, or participate in some operations and training.
- Additionally, many HIV positive Sailors and Marines feel that this limitation on duty assignments and sea time negatively affect their promotion competitiveness.

"I had been pursuing a commissioning program when I was informed of my HIV+ status. My career goals of becoming an officer came to a sudden and devastating end." HIV positive Sailor

If one of your goals in joining the Navy was “to see the world,” you will have to alter that goal if you become HIV+.

TRUE

FALSE

A:

Correct!

- The statement is true.
- If you become infected with HIV, you will only be stationed within CONUS.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- The statement is not false.
- If you become infected with HIV, you will only be stationed within CONUS.

BACK

What aspects of a person's life does HIV affect? (Select all that

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐ **Relationships**
- ☐ **Family**
- ☐ **Career**

A:

Correct!

- Correct.
- Having HIV effects all of the following aspects of your life:
  - Career
  - Health
  - Family
  - Lifestyle
  - Relationship

BACK NEXT

A:

Correct!

- Yes, all of the answers to this question were correct.

BACK NEXT

There is no cure for HIV.

TRUE

FALSE

Correct!

- The statement is true.
- There is no cure for HIV.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- The statement is not false.
- There is no cure for HIV.

BACK

Which of the following is a consequence of being a Servicemember with HIV?

- You will be allowed to finish your tour at your last stateside duty station.
- You will be immediately medically discharged.
- There are no Navy-imposed consequences to having HIV.
- You will only be assigned to non-deployable CONUS billets.

A:

Correct!

- Correct.
- One consequence of being a Servicemember with HIV is that you will only be assigned to non-deployable CONUS billets.

BACK NEXT

A:

Incorrect!

- Consider your options and try again!
- This is not a consequence of being a Servicemember with HIV.

BACK

Your relationships with family, friends, and co-workers may be jeopardized by your HIV+ status.

TRUE

FALSE

A:

Correct!

- The statement is true.
- It depends on each individual, but reaction to your HIV+ status may range from disappoint to rejection from those close to you. Of course, they may all rally to support you, too.

BACK NEXT

A:

Incorrect!

- The statement is not false.
- It depends on each individual, but reaction to your HIV+ status may range from disappoint to rejection from those close to you. Of course, they may all rally to support you, too.

BACK

HIV Prevention

Introduction

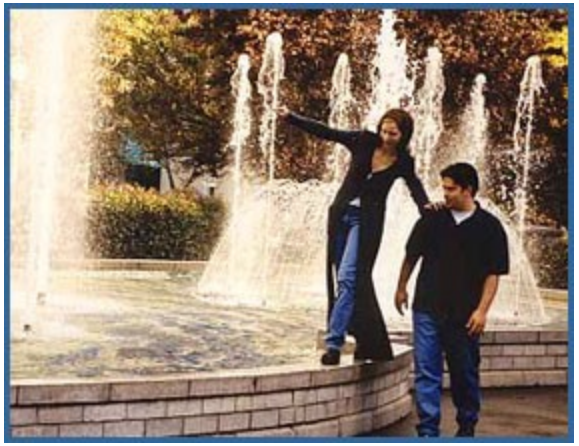
- HIV infection is one hundred percent preventable.
- The choices you make determine your risk of getting infected with HIV.
- Making the right choices will prevent you from getting HIV/AIDS.

Biggest Threat

- The biggest threat to Sailors and Marines is unprotected sex.
- You can avoid getting it by following safe, sensible sex practices.
- Make up your mind that starting right now, you'll always protect yourself during sex by using a Latex condom. Don't volunteer to be the next victim of this preventable disease.

Abstinence

- One way a person can completely eliminate the risk of getting HIV is through abstinence.
- Even if you have had sex in the past, you can say no to sex in the future, until you decide the time is right for you.
- Saying no to sex eliminates your risk of getting HIV.



Monogamy

- Another way you can eliminate your risk of getting HIV is by having sex in a long-term, mutually monogamous relationship with one person who is not infected with HIV.
- Remember, monogamy works only if both partners are faithful.

Condom Use

- If abstinence or monogamy are not options for you at this time in your life, you can greatly reduce your risk of getting HIV by always using a condom during sexual contact.
- Condoms significantly reduce the risk of getting HIV, but only if you always use them and use them correctly.

Fewer/High-Risk Partners

- In addition to condom use, people who decide to have sex outside of a monogamous relationship can further reduce risk of getting HIV by having fewer sexual partners and refusing to have sex with high-risk partners.
- High-risk partners are people who trade sex for money or anyone you know who has had many sexual partners.

Risk Reduction

- Risk reduction requires planning. For example, always plan to have Latex condoms with you and make up your mind to use them.
- Don't wait until you're in the heat of the moment, because it's hard to think clearly then.

Alcohol

- Alcohol increases your risk of getting HIV because it can fog your mind and ruin your judgment.
- Many people have gotten infected because they got drunk and hooked up with a stranger for a one-night stand.

HIV is preventable.

TRUE

FALSE

A:

Correct!

- The statement is true.
- HIV is preventable.

BACK NEXT

Incorrect!

- The statement is not false.
- HIV is preventable.

BACK

How can you reduce your risk of getting HIV? (Select all that apply.)

- ☐
- ☐
- ☐ **Practice abstinence**
- ☐ **Have sex only in a mutually monogamous, long-term**
- ☐ **Have sex only with those who “look clean”**

Correct!

- Correct.
- You can reduce your risk of getting HIV by:
  - Using a Latex condom.
  - Practicing abstinence.
  - Having sex only in a mutually monogamous, long-term relationship.

BACK NEXT

A:

Incorrect!

- You can not reduce your risk of getting HIV by:
  - Taking “the pill”.
  - Having sex only with those who “look clean”.

BACK

Summary

Review

- HIV affects active duty Sailors and Marines and that HIV infection is a very harmful disease.
- Heterosexual transmission of HIV occurs and Sailors and Marines have become infected.
- HIV infection negatively affects your health, lifestyle, relationships, family, and career.

Scenario Review

Remember, HIV transmission is preventable and there are risk reduction options designed to help prevent the spread of this disease.

Additional Resources

- Navy Environmental Health Center (NEHC) Sexual Health and Responsibility Program (SHARP) located at http://www-nehc.med.navy.mil/hp/sharp
- UNAIDS (2004). AIDS Epidemic Update 2004. Joint United Nations Program on HIV and AIDS. http://www.unaids.org/wad2004/report.html
- CDC (2003). Advancing HIV Prevention: New Strategies for a Changing Epidemic. United States, 2003. MMWR. April 18, 2003/52(15); 329-332. http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/wk/mm5215.pdf

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